Yukon Protected Areas Strategy

DISCUSSION PAPER

November 1997

Yukon
Government

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A Message from the Minister

The release of this discussion paper marks the beginning of an exciting period in the Yukon. Over the next few years, Yukon citizens and all orders of government will be working together to set up a network of protected areas from the British Columbia border to the Arctic coast. It is an important and challenging task.

Our shared goal is to protect the natural and cultural values that sustain our environment and contribute so much to our quality of life. To achieve this, we need to protect critical wildlife habitat, important heritage sites, significant wetlands and representative areas in each of the Yukon's 23 ecoregions.

This work cannot be done by using a predetermined number to set upper and lower limits on the amount of land to be protected. Instead, we must proceed by using principles of sound ecosystem management. We must ensure that all those places which play a critical role in sustaining natural processes receive some form of protection.

We also need an organized plan, or strategy, to guide our work over the years it will take to implement our goals. Over the next five months, we will be developing this strategy by identifying specific goals, targets, guiding principles and an action plan for planning and establishing a network of protected areas in the territory. Once the strategy is in place, we will begin implementation immediately to ensure progress in meeting these goals.

I would like to emphasize that the strategy must be balanced, and reflect both our environmental agenda and our economic agenda. It will not be a vehicle to protect every local site or area that is identified as having some value. Rather, the strategy must identify priorities for protection, give guidance as to how the selection of protected areas can be balanced with other interests and set clear goals and commitments.

We are committed to developing and implementing the strategy through public participation, cooperation with other governments, the use of scientific and traditional knowledge, and work with interest groups, industry representatives, communities, boards and councils.

A first step in incorporating public participation was holding the protected areas workshop in May 1997. This workshop was attended by governments, First Nations, industry, conservation groups, boards and councils and the public. Participants talked about the things that concerned them and identified issues to be resolved. At the recommendation of the workshop, an 18-member non-government advisory group has since been established to provide further non-government input into the process.

This discussion paper is a direct outcome of what we heard at the May 1997 workshop. It identifies the issues and questions that need to be addressed as we develop the strategy. Your response to this paper will help to set the direction for further public workshops to be held in January 1998 and it will also be used in the preparation of a draft strategy scheduled for public review in February 1998.

I invite you to respond in writing to this paper and to participate in the open houses and public meetings that will be held in Yukon communities during November and December.

Your participation in this, and future rounds of consultation, will help shape a strategy that truly reflects the interests of Yukon people. I welcome your comments.

Sincerely,

Eric Fairclough

2 Introduction

The Yukon Protected Areas Strategy

The Yukon Protected Areas Strategy will be a plan for the identification, selection and designation of protected areas in the Yukon. It will be the guidebook we use to establish a network of protected areas in the territory. Protected areas are special places which are set aside for the protection of outstanding cultural and natural values.

Yukon people have repeatedly told their governments that our natural and cultural resources must be treated with respect. They have also told us that we must get on with the job of identifying and protecting the values and features of special significance.

Consistent with this public support, the Yukon government has over the years made numerous commitments to protected areas. Putting the identification and establishment of protected areas in the Yukon at the top of the government's environmental agenda shows our commitment to get on with the job.

To develop this strategy, we must work in an inclusive, thoughtful and careful manner. We need to involve the scientific community, governments, boards and councils, industry, stakeholders and the public. We need to define a vision for protected areas in the Yukon that balances our environmental needs with our economic ones. We need to identify how protected areas will be planned and established. We also need to identify and commit to the actions necessary to turn process into products, or new parks and protected areas on the ground.

This discussion paper sets the foundation for building that plan and strategy. It identifies key issues that were raised at the stakeholder workshop on protected areas held in May 1997. It also asks the questions that will help define the vision, process and action plan that will be part of the strategy.

Your responses to the questions contained in this paper will be instrumental in shaping the strategy and the future of protected areas in the Yukon.

How the Strategy will be developed and implemented

The strategy will be developed and implemented in a coordinated, open and participatory way.

It will involve cooperation between the Yukon government, the federal government and Yukon First Nation governments. It will also involve mandated boards and councils such as the Yukon Land-Use Planning Council, the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the established Renewable Resources Councils.

Public and stakeholder participation is also important. A broad range of stakeholder groups participated in the Yukon Protected Areas Strategy Workshop in May 1997. A number of these groups are now represented on the Yukon Protected Areas Strategy Advisory Committee, which was established in September to provide additional non-government advice on the development of the strategy.

Opportunities for meaningful public participation will be included throughout. This will involve workshops, discussion papers, open houses, public meetings, community consultation and meetings with interested groups as required.

The strategy will be developed and implemented in four stages:

Development of the Strategy

Stage One: This involves the preparation of a **Yukon-wide strategy** that establishes goals, guidelines and processes for establishing protected areas in the Yukon.

Completion date for this phase is March 1998.

Implementation of the Strategy

Stage Two: This involves the preparation of **regional protected areas plans** and **specific proposals** for protected areas in cooperation with governments, stakeholders, local communities, boards and councils.

Depending on the advice received during our consultations, stage two might also be used to outline basic management guidelines for proposed protected areas. This would allow governments and assessment processes to conduct more informed reviews regarding the establishment and designation of the proposed areas.

This stage will begin in April 1998. It is expected that several traditional territories may be involved in this stage at the same time. Time lines for planning, however, will vary according to local circumstances and availability of resources. This stage will be ongoing until all traditional territories in the Yukon have completed their protected areas plans and proposals.

Stage Three: This involves the **establishment** and **designation** of the protected areas as appropriate, following governments' review of the proposals put forward by the regional plans.

This stage will be ongoing and will proceed as regional plans are completed and specific protected areas proposals are forwarded to governments.

Stage Four: This involves the preparation of detailed **management plans** for the designated protected areas in coordination with affected stakeholders, communities and boards and councils.

This stage will be ongoing as required.

Protected Areas and First Nations

Yukon First Nations have a special relationship with the Yukon environment that is recognized in the Umbrella Final Agreement and First Nation Final Agreements. The Yukon government respects that relationship and is committed to developing protected areas in close cooperation with First Nation governments.

In fulfilling this commitment, the Yukon government will:

- continue to negotiate, as appropriate, Special Management Areas through the existing provisions of the land claims process;
- ensure that local protected areas planning is carried out on the basis of First Nation Traditional Territories;
- work closely with Renewable Resources Councils in carrying out local protected areas planning; and
- use traditional knowledge as well as scientific knowledge in local planning processes.

What are Protected Areas?

Background

Protected areas are special places which are established and designated for the protection of important cultural or natural values.

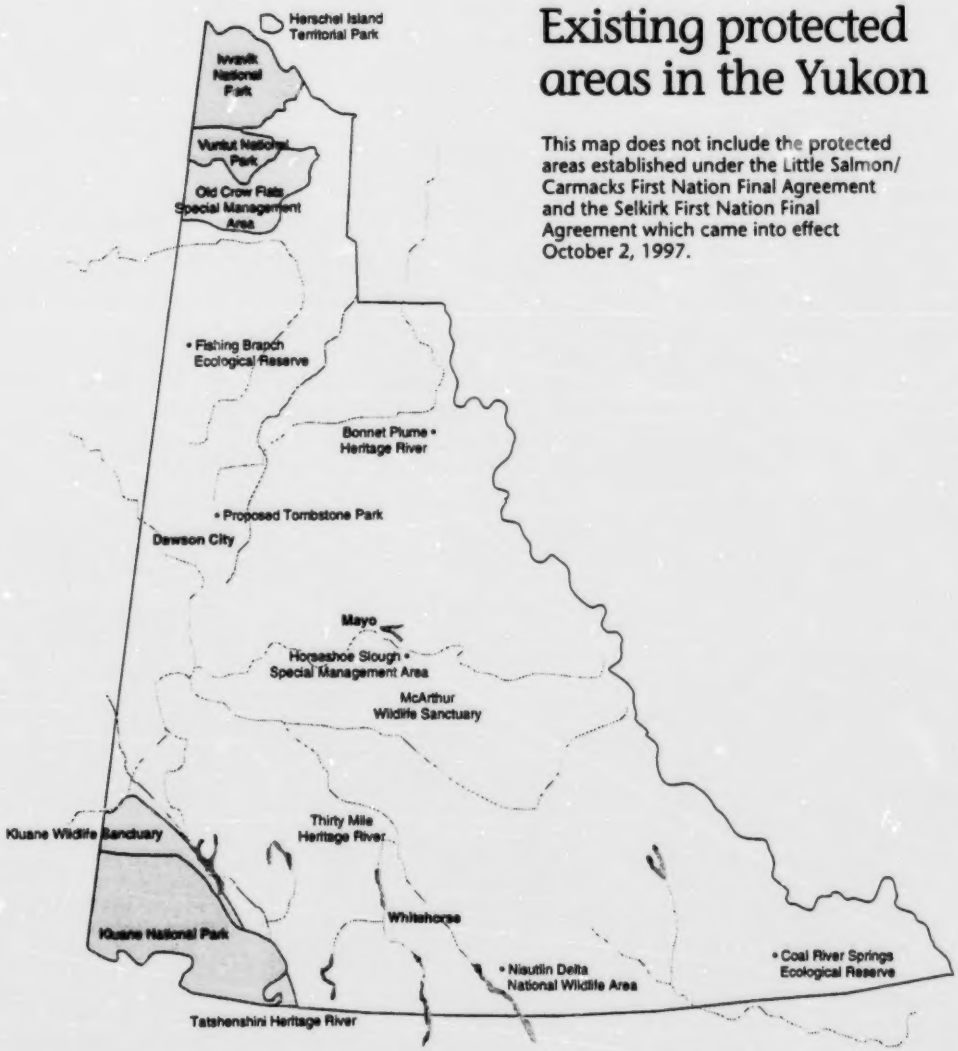
Protected areas have always been part of human culture. Since the beginning of time people have associated certain places with special values and protected them from disturbance or exploitation. These have included religious, spiritual and cultural places, and more recently parks and natural areas.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defines a protected area as:

- "An area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources and managed through legal or other effective means."

Existing protected areas in the Yukon

This map does not include the protected areas established under the Little Salmon/ Carmacks First Nation Final Agreement and the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement which came into effect October 2, 1997.



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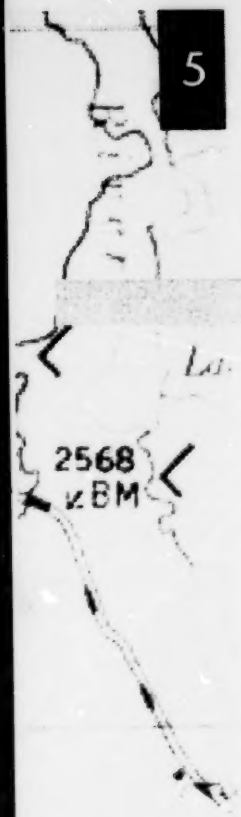

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In the Yukon, protected areas fall under the category of Special Management Areas as defined in the Umbrella Final Agreement. As such, they will be subject to the processes set out in Chapter 10 of First Nations Final Agreements for Special Management Areas regarding consultation, establishment and management planning requirements.

There are many different types of protected areas. There are also many different reasons why they may be established. Examples of different types of protected areas, the usual purposes for which they are established, and the jurisdiction they normally fall under, include the following:

Jurisdiction	Type of protected area	Usual purpose for establishing area
federal	National Park	• representation of natural region at national level • maintenance of outstanding natural landscape • outdoor recreation
federal	National Wildlife Area	• protection of nationally significant wildlife
federal	Migratory Bird Sanctuary	• protection of migratory bird habitat • protection of important wetlands and riparian areas
territorial	Territorial Park	• representation of natural region at territorial level • maintenance of biodiversity
territorial	Ecological Reserve	• protection of unique and/or sensitive natural feature
territorial	Heritage Site/Historic Site	• protection of heritage and historic sites
territorial	Habitat Protection Area	• protection of wildlife species protection of habitat
territorial	Designated Wilderness Areas	• protection of wilderness
territorial	Designated Recreation Areas	• outdoor recreation
territorial	Watershed Protection Areas	• protection of water quality
territorial	Heritage River	• recognition of outstanding natural, heritage and recreational values
territorial/ municipal	Buffer Zone/Green Belt	• protection of sensitive feature • visual green space • buffer from development
municipal	Municipal/community parks	• protection of natural or cultural features • outdoor recreation

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Commitments to Protected Areas

Governments, First Nations and industry have committed to establishing protected areas in the Yukon through the following legislation, agreements and policy initiatives.

Legislation

Yukon First Nation Final Agreements (1995) make commitments to:

- ensure conservation in the management of all fish and wildlife and their habitats;
- maintain important features of the Yukon's natural or cultural environment for the benefit of Yukon residents and all Canadians;
- integrate the knowledge and experience of Yukon First Nations People and scientific communities; and
- consult with local boards and councils in the management of renewable resources.

The Environment Act (1991) commits the Government of Yukon to:

- recognize that it is responsible for the protection of the collective interest of the people of the Yukon in the quality of the natural environment and the protection of the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations;
- ensure maintenance of essential ecological processes and the preservation of biological diversity; and
- recognize that wilderness has intrinsic ecological as well as economic value.

The Inuvialuit Final Agreement (1984) commits to:

- protect and preserve the Arctic wildlife, environment and biological productivity.

International Protocols and Territorial Agreements

The Canadian Biodiversity Strategy (1995), based on the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), endorsed by all Canadian jurisdictions commits the Yukon to:

- conserve biological diversity and protect wildlife habitat;
- complete the protection of areas representative of land-based natural regions by the year 2000;
- accelerate the protection of areas representative of marine natural regions;
- use interim protection measures to ensure that candidate protected areas are not compromised by development;
- prepare legislation, policies, inventories and guidelines to support the establishment and management of protected areas; and
- use open and meaningful public and stakeholder participation processes and sound scientific information and traditional knowledge.

The Statement of Commitment to Complete Canada's Networks of Protected Areas (1992) and Endangered Spaces Campaign (1990) endorsed by all Canadian jurisdictions commit the Yukon to:

- protect ecologically representative areas by the year 2000; and
- cooperate in the protection of ecosystems, landscapes and wildlife habitat.

The Whitehorse Mining Initiative (1994) commits to:

- create and set aside from industrial development by the year 2000 those protected areas required to achieve representation of Canada's land based natural regions; and
- identify candidate protected areas based on scientific criteria followed by consultation with the mining industry and all other stakeholders while taking into consideration economic, environmental and social information.

The National Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk (1996). Although the Yukon has not signed this accord yet, the government has indicated support for its provisions relating to:

- protection of habitat of threatened and endangered species and the development of recovery plans.

Government Policies

The National Parks System Plan (1997) objective is:

- to protect for all time representative natural areas of Canadian significance in a system of national parks and to leave it unimpaired for future generations.

The Federal Policy on Wetland Conservation (1991) commits to:

- conserving wetlands of significance to Canadians.

The Yukon Conservation Strategy (1990 and revised 1996) commits to:

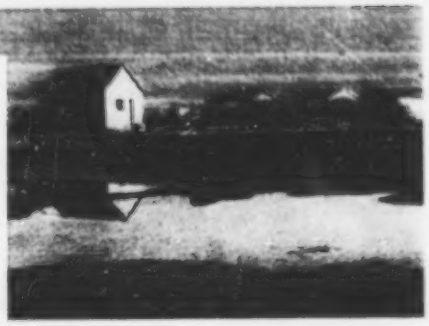
- set aside representative areas for the Yukon's 23 ecoregions;
- provide legislative protection for a diversity of wildlife habitats; and
- protect important and spectacular wilderness areas of the Yukon.

The Yukon Parks System Plan (1992) objectives include:

- ecological representation of all ecoregions in the Yukon by the year 2000; and
- protection of rare species of plants and animals, unique landscape features and natural processes.

8 The Importance of Protected Areas

Key values



Protected areas are important for a number of reasons. They help to sustain healthy ecosystems. They assist in preserving important cultural areas and heritage sites. They can also enhance job opportunities in fields such as tourism and resource management.

The following are some of the key values associated with the establishment of protected areas.

Maintaining essential ecological processes: Protected areas can help maintain natural ecosystems and important ecological processes.

Preserving biodiversity: Protected areas help to preserve examples of different ecosystems and the diversity of life that exists within those ecosystems.

Maintaining wildlife and habitat: Wildlife is important in the Yukon. If key habitats are disturbed, wildlife populations may be adversely affected. Protected areas can help maintain important habitats and wildlife populations.

Maintaining wilderness areas: Wilderness is recognized as having intrinsic ecological value as well as economic value. Protected areas can help maintain these wilderness values.

Preserving special or unique natural features: Protected areas can help preserve outstanding and unique natural features.

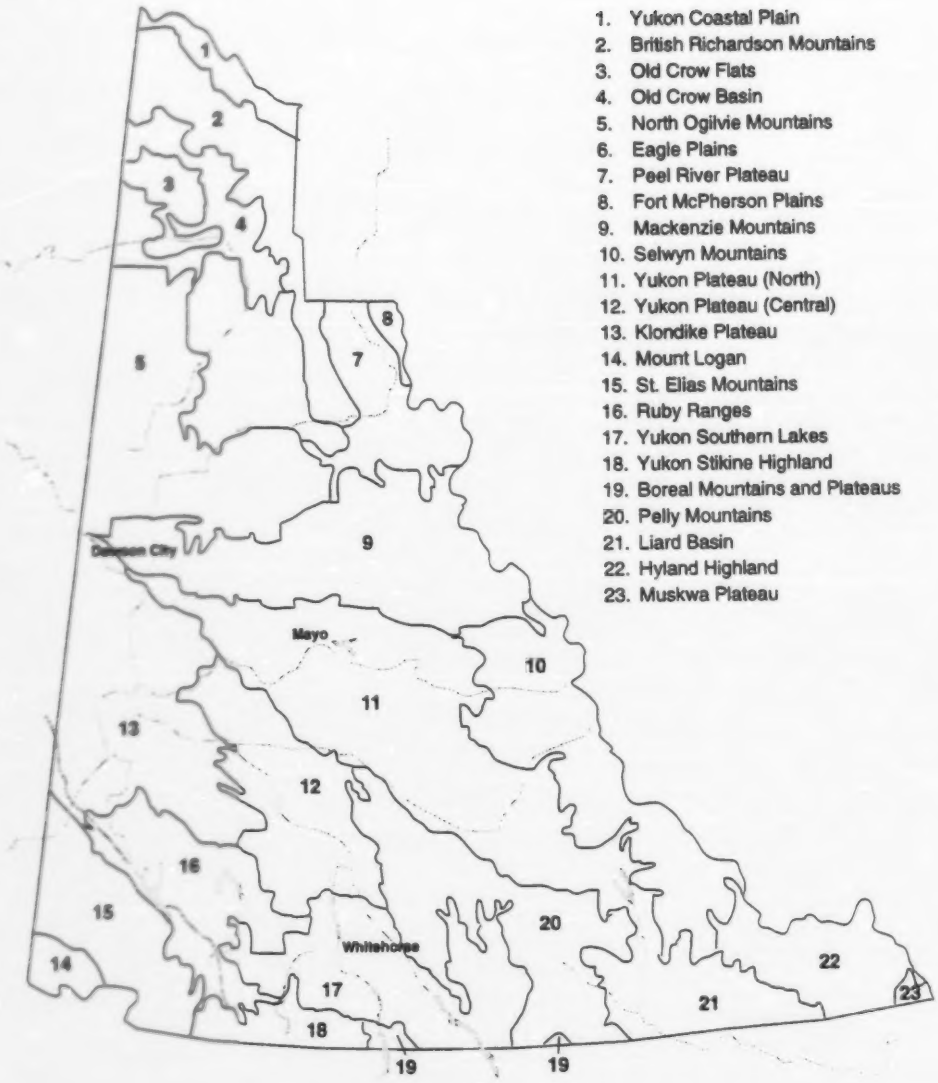
Protecting social, cultural and heritage sites: Many places have heritage and social values. Some areas are used for traditional activities. Others have heritage resources. Protected areas can maintain these sites for present and future generations.

Recreation benefits: Many natural areas in the Yukon are used for outdoor recreation. Protected areas can help to maintain these values for the benefit of residents and visitors.

Economic benefits: Protected areas can enhance business opportunities in tourism and wilderness outfitting. They can also support jobs in resource management, scientific research and heritage restoration.

A completed protected areas network will also mean more certainty for industries such as mining and timber harvesting regarding where they can or cannot operate.

Ecoregions of the Yukon

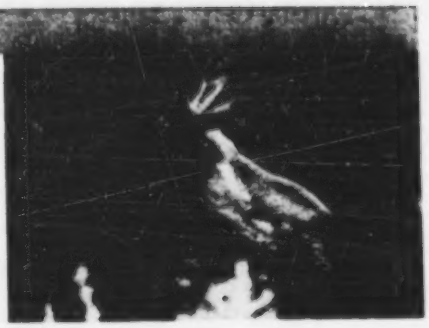


1. Yukon Coastal Plain
2. British Richardson Mountains
3. Old Crow Flats
4. Old Crow Basin
5. North Ogilvie Mountains
6. Eagle Plains
7. Peel River Plateau
8. Fort McPherson Plains
9. Mackenzie Mountains
10. Selwyn Mountains
11. Yukon Plateau (North)
12. Yukon Plateau (Central)
13. Klondike Plateau
14. Mount Logan
15. St. Elias Mountains
16. Ruby Ranges
17. Yukon Southern Lakes
18. Yukon Stikine Highland
19. Boreal Mountains and Plateaus
20. Pelly Mountains
21. Liard Basin
22. Hyland Highland
23. Muskwa Plateau

Traditional Territories

11 A Vision for Protected Areas

Introduction



Governments in the Yukon have already begun to form a vision for protected areas in the territory. This vision is defined by the legislation and commitments these governments have agreed to. (see page 6: Commitments to Protected Areas) In order to transform this general vision into reality, governments will need to identify specific goals, targets and principles on what, where, why and how much should be protected.

The Yukon-wide strategy will define a clear long-term vision that includes Yukon-wide goals, commitments, targets and guiding principles for the establishment of protected areas.

Background

A vision for protected areas can be described in a number of ways. Some jurisdictions have defined their vision and target numerically, by committing a certain percentage of their land base to protected areas. Other jurisdictions have defined their target qualitatively, by defining the objectives the protected areas system should achieve.

The Yukon government's commitments help define a general vision for protected areas. These include:

- a commitment to define targets through scientific criteria which support ecosystem management principles rather than using a percentage based numerical target;
- a commitment to maintain essential ecological processes and biological diversity;
- a commitment to establish a core protected area in each of the 23 ecoregions in the Yukon; and
- a commitment to protect critical wildlife habitats.

From the May 97 workshop

Participants identified the need for a more clearly articulated vision for the Yukon. Additional comments included:

- general support for a core protected area in each of the 23 ecoregions in the Yukon;
- general support for protection of all significant wetlands;
- general support for protection of critical wildlife habitat;
- some participants noted there should be a limit to the amount of area protected so that industry has greater operating certainty; and
- some participants noted that protected areas should include enough area to be able to maintain essential ecological processes and ecosystem integrity.

Question: What is your long-term vision for a system of protected areas in the Yukon?

12 Values and Features to be Protected

Introduction

It is important to properly manage all aspects of the natural and cultural environment in the Yukon. Protected areas afford an opportunity to provide special protection for natural and cultural features of outstanding value.

The strategy will not be able to protect every local site or area that is identified as having some value. Protected areas will have to be balanced with the need for leaving other areas open for development in the Yukon. Priorities for protection will have to be set.

The Yukon-wide strategy will clearly identify which types of values and features should be considered for protection.

Background

A partial listing of the values often considered important for protection is contained on page 8 (The importance of protected areas).

From the May 97 workshop

Participants at the workshop identified the following values and features as important to consider for protection:

- ecosystem values;
- important wildlife and habitat values;
- areas which have special or unique natural features;
- wetlands;
- wilderness areas;
- areas which have important cultural or traditional use values;
- heritage areas and sites;
- areas with important spiritual values;
- important recreation areas; and
- areas which help create economic opportunities for local communities.

Workshop participants emphasized the need for achieving a balance between protected areas and areas identified for resource development.

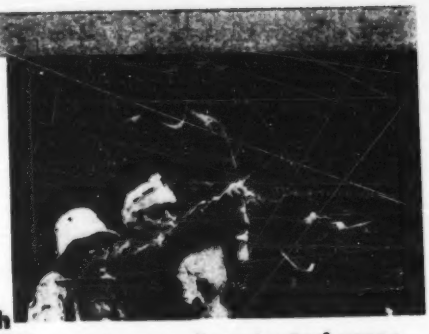
Question: Which types of values and features do you think should be considered priorities for protection?

In what types of areas would you expect to find these values and features?

13

Activities Allowed Within Protected Areas

Introduction



Protected areas need to be managed carefully to ensure that the values they are protecting are not damaged through inappropriate activities. In some cases, legislation defines the types of activities which are permitted or restricted. In other cases, this is left to the management planning process.

The Yukon-wide strategy will clarify the role of policy and legislation in determining which activities are permitted or restricted within different types of protected areas.

Background

In the Yukon, some commitments have already been made regarding activities that should or should not be allowed in protected areas.

- First Nation Final Agreements guarantee Yukon First Nations members' rights regarding subsistence hunting, fishing and trapping within all protected areas.
- The *National Parks Act* defines some of the activities that are permitted or restricted within National Parks.
- The *Canada Wildlife Act* and Wildlife Area Regulations define the activities that are generally prohibited within a National Wildlife Area.
- The Whitehorse Mining Initiative identifies that protected areas required to achieve representation of natural regions should be set aside from industrial development.

Other than these commitments, there is no additional legislation or policy in the Yukon defining the specific activities to be permitted or prohibited within the different types of protected areas. The process of determining what activities are allowed within these protected areas is left almost entirely to the management planning process. Management plans must be done in accordance with First Nation Final Agreement requirements for consultation. Joint management planning with local boards and councils can also be pursued.

From the May 97 workshop

Participants noted a number of points on this issue:

- the types of activities permitted should depend on the objectives for the area and should not compromise the values being protected;
- management planning to determine permitted activities should be done with participation from stakeholders, the public and the local community;
- the protected areas network should include options for core protected areas with a high level of protection and adjacent buffers and corridors with less protection; and
- economic activities should be allowed within protected areas when they are compatible with the management objectives for the area.

Question: Should policy and legislation play a role in determining which activities should be allowed?

What role should management planning play?

14

Resolving Conflicting Values and Interests

Introduction

There are numerous conflicting values and interests regarding the management of natural resources in the Yukon. For example, while some protected areas may provide ecological and tourism benefits, they may also detract from opportunities for resource development. There can also be differences between local community interests and broader territorial interests regarding the planning and selection of potential protected areas.

The Yukon-wide strategy will identify a proposed method whereby conflicting interests can be recognized, analyzed and resolved in an equitable manner.

Background

Possible methods to help resolve conflicts include:

- ensure that all stakeholders have opportunities to participate in the planning process including: local and Yukon-wide interests; and environmental and industry interests;
- establish a clear set of targets, guidelines and ground rules for protected areas planning that all players agree to beforehand;
- commit to using accurate baseline data and resource assessments to ensure that values are identified properly before final decisions are made;
- ensure that all information is broadly available to all parties and easily understood; and
- explore options and evaluate long-term impacts of options before making decisions.

From the May 97 workshop

Participants suggested a number of options to help clarify interests and resolve conflicts. These include:

- conducting resource assessments to accurately identify resource values where possible;
- improving communication between governments, agencies and stakeholders so that the different values can be better understood;
- establishing land use plans to set the framework for protected areas; and
- incorporating public and stakeholder participation at all stages of the process.

Question: What methods do you think the Yukon Protected Areas Strategy should use to resolve conflicting interests and values?

15

Coordination with Other Land and Resource Management Processes

Introduction

The Yukon Protected Areas Strategy is only one of many processes that have an impact on land and resource management in the Yukon. It will be important that protected areas planning be closely coordinated with these other processes.

The Yukon-wide strategy will identify how it will be linked with other land and resource management processes in the Yukon.

Background

There are many processes that can potentially impact protected areas planning. Each process is administered through its own agency and follows its own policies and procedures. These processes include:

- Yukon land-use planning;
- the Development Assessment Process;
- forest management planning;
- fish and wildlife management planning;
- heritage resource management planning;
- mineral resource disposition and development;
- oil and gas resource management, disposition and development;
- transportation planning and development;
- hydro development planning; and
- land use permitting and land disposition.

From the May 97 workshop

Participants emphasized the need to coordinate protected areas planning with other resource and land management initiatives. Comments included:

- protected areas need to be coordinated with responsible resource management adjacent to and outside of the protected areas;
- establish Regional Land-Use Planning Commissions immediately to coordinate what's happening; and
- establish accords in the regions for cooperation and partnerships between agencies, governments, boards and councils, non-government organizations and First Nations.

Question: How can we best encourage inter-agency cooperation in developing a Yukon Protected Areas strategy and planning for protected areas in the regions?

16 Planning at the Traditional Territory Level

Introduction

The Yukon-wide strategy will set only goals, targets and guidelines for planning and establishing protected areas in the Yukon. It will not identify specific sites for protection. Identification of specific sites for protection will take place at the traditional territory level and involve local communities, groups, boards and councils as well as Yukon-wide interests.

Because protected areas are of interest to all Yukon people, opportunities will also be provided for Yukoners across the territory to provide input and advice. It will be particularly important to ensure that industry's voice is heard.

The Yukon-wide strategy will identify a proposed process for planning, identifying and establishing protected areas in the traditional territories.

Background

Governments have already made commitments to local processes and public involvement in protected areas planning. These include commitments to:

- using open and meaningful public and stakeholder participation processes;
- cooperating with other governments in the protection of ecosystems, landscapes and wildlife habitat;
- working with local boards and councils, especially the Renewable Resources Councils, in the management of renewable resources at the community level; and
- using sound scientific information and traditional knowledge to ensure that social, economic, cultural and ecological factors are considered.

From the May '97 workshop

Workshop participants noted that local protected areas planning should:

- include effective public education, communication and consultation;
- be community driven and involve the public;
- include input from the scientific community, industry, stakeholder groups and Yukon-wide interests;
- include ecosystem research and resource assessments;
- be linked with First Nations and mandated boards and councils; and
- recognize resource limitations within governments, boards and councils.

Question: Who should be involved in protected areas planning within traditional territories?

What steps should be included in protected areas planning at the traditional territory level?

17

Defining Which Traditional Territories Should Be Planned First

Introduction

In order to meet our commitments, protected areas planning will need to be done in every traditional territory in the Yukon. Limited resources dictate that not all territories can be planned at the same time. As well, not all areas are at the same level of readiness for protected areas planning.

The Yukon-wide strategy will identify how priorities for planning in the traditional territories will be set.

Background

A number of stakeholders have already indicated their priorities for protected areas planning. Some established Renewable Resources Councils in traditional territories where claims have been settled have already identified the need for protected areas planning within their areas. As well, some communities have expressed interest in specific protected areas projects.

From the May 97 workshop

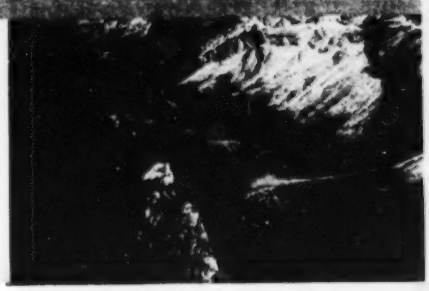
Participants at the workshop identified the following as the types of areas which should be given priority for protected areas planning and establishment:

- traditional territories which have Renewable Resources Councils and planning structures already in place;
- regions in which the communities are willing to get started on protected areas planning as soon as possible;
- regions which are under development pressure from resource industries and where opportunities for protection may be lost if action is not taken soon, such as in the southeast Yukon;
- regions where work is already in progress and research and analysis is under way; and
- traditional territories which are still under Land Claims negotiations, so that the protected areas could be discussed and negotiated through First Nation Final Agreements.

Question: Which regions or traditional territories do you think should be given priority for protected areas planning in the Yukon?

18 Interim Protection

Introduction



Interim protection refers to the practice of restricting resource development activities within a proposed area on an interim basis until a final decision on the protection of the area is made. This allows for the interim protection of the values being proposed for protection so they are not lost during the planning and decision making process.

The Yukon-wide strategy will identify how and when interim protection measures will be used in the process of planning and establishing protected areas.

Background

The following are existing commitments to using interim protection:

- The Canadian Biodiversity Strategy directs governments to "use interim protection measures to ensure that candidate protected areas are not compromised by development"; and
- The Whitehorse Mining Initiative states that "Governments should consider what interim protection management for protected areas candidate sites, if any, would be appropriate to ensure that these sites are not compromised by development".

The Whitehorse Mining Initiative also notes that governments need to consider: the impact that interim protection may have on affected stakeholders and the economy; the timing and duration of interim protection; and consultation with affected stakeholders.

To date, interim protection has taken place in the Yukon through mineral staking bans in selected areas and one timber harvesting deferral in an area of high conservation value. Map notations have also been used to discourage land use permitting and disposal in areas of park interest.

From the May 97 workshop

Participants noted the following points:

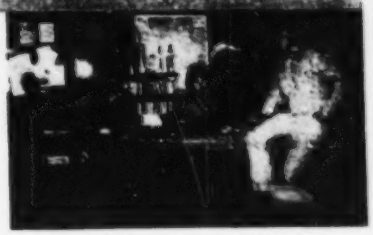
- without interim protection, the values being considered for protection are at risk;
- some potential park areas now under consideration appear to be at risk due to a lack of interim protection;
- industry advocates are concerned that interim protection restricts resource development activities and creates an uncertain investment climate; and
- a lack of interim protection creates an uneven playing field for negotiating agreements on protected areas. With current mining laws, any one individual can unilaterally stake a mining claim and potentially jeopardize the protection option.

Question: What type of interim protection is needed during the planning and establishment of protected areas in the Yukon?

When and how should interim protection be used?

19 Developing the action plan

Introduction



To be effective, the Yukon-wide strategy will need to include an implementation plan with firm commitments for action and allocation of staff and resources. In this way, governments will be able to identify how the commitments will be acted upon and when.

The Yukon-wide strategy will include an implementation plan which will identify the actions, timing and resources required to follow through on the commitments made.

Background

So far, the first phase of developing the strategy has been led by the Government of the Yukon. The expected completion date for this phase is March 1998. It is hoped that the main implementation phase of the strategy will start immediately afterwards with the beginning of protected areas planning processes in selected traditional territories.

Implementation will require coordination, research, staff and the allocation of resources. It will involve considerable field work and resource assessments. It will also include participation processes with governments, boards, councils, stakeholders and the public. While these processes can be time consuming, the implementation plan should set clear targets and time frames for the completion of plans and establishment of protected areas.

From the May 97 workshop

Participants noted that implementation should include the following steps:

- establishment of clear goals, commitments, targets and guidelines;
- establishment of a broad and open public consultation process;
- allocation of adequate staff and financial resources;
- linkage with Land Claims and mandated boards and councils;
- establishment of locally based participatory planning processes; and
- research and resource assessments.

Question: What actions should be taken to implement the strategy?

By when should these actions be taken?

The Next Step

How your input will be used

Input from this consultation phase will be compiled into a report which will be made available to the public.

The feedback received will form the basis for holding focused workshops in January 1998 to address specific issues of concern which need to be dealt with in more detail.

The input received in this phase will also be used in setting a direction for the draft and final Yukon Protected Areas Strategy which will be developed over the winter and spring of 1998.

The next steps

The process for completing the Yukon-wide strategy will be as follows:

completion of current public consultation	**January 9, 1998**
release of public consultation report	**January 1998**
focused workshops on key issues	**January 1998**
preparation of draft protected areas strategy	**February 1998**
public consultation on the draft strategy	**February 1998**
preparation of final strategy	**March 1998**

Once the Yukon-wide strategy has been finalized, it is expected that work will begin immediately with local boards and councils to implement the strategy through protected areas planning in the priority regions.

Question: Have we missed anything important in this consultation phase? Are there other comments about the Yukon Protected Areas Strategy that you would like to make? How do you want to be involved in the remainder of the Yukon Protected Areas Strategy process?

Providing Your Comments

Where to send your comments

Please provide your comments to us by January 9, 1998 at this address:

Yukon Protected Areas Strategy
Department of Renewable Resources
Government of the Yukon, R-4A
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2C6
Fax: 393-6223

For further information

For further information, please contact:

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